



**1104th meeting of the
Pacific Coast Numismatic Society**
7:30PM Wednesday April 23, 2008
Building C, Fort Mason
San Francisco, California

Old Streets of San Francisco Revisited:
A slide show of SF tokens and streets
Jerry Schimmel

Pacific Coast Numismatic Society
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Please join us Wednesday April 23, 2008 to hear Society Fellow, *Jerry Schimmel*, tell us about San Francisco tokens and history. Please remember to check the board in front of Building C for the exact room number. Also please note that this month our meeting is not the last Wednesday as there are five of them this April.

1103rd meeting. March 26, 2008 An Interpretation of Token Denominations: Examples from Latin America

Federico Castillo (reviewed by *Herb Miles*) Federico talk was entitled "Tokens: An Introduction to Denominations in Latin American Tokens" which was an educational slide show on the varied designated values of coffee and sugar cane plantation tokens in Latin America.

Federico's primary sources are three books, "The Tokens of Guatemala", "Costa Rican Tokens" (by PCNS Fellow Jerry Schimmel), and Miguel Chacon & Elisa Carazo Flores' "Boletos de Café." Many of the pieces resemble coins which is what attracted Federico to collect them. He mentioned that the tokens are very popular but the market has gone through a boom and then a bust cycle just in the past 6 years or so!

Most of those illustrated were minted in France, San Francisco, Belgium, England, and local mints in Guatemala or Costa Rica. They were used in a variety of ways for the worker; for supervision, as a store of wealth, as units of work, to maintain control within a defined area of the country, for propaganda, and finally as money in an isolated area far from a place where regular coinage could be obtained.

Some early coffee tokens are denominated in "reales" as were the coins of the time, i.e., the $\frac{1}{2}$ countermarked real from the Tiribi hacienda. Others are denominated as "cajuelas" (about 22 kilograms) or "fanega" (20 cajuelas) or "canasto" (basket).

A 1910 piece from the Hacienda de la Guardia shows a value of 10 centavos as does another piece from La Esperanza for J. T. Chaves' store. A $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ "lata" are from Panama where cajuela is not used, thus a lata is equal to a cajuela.

A 5 medidas piece should equal 5 cajuelas according to Federico since "una medida" is equal to "una cajuela," the medida being a useful measuring tool when filling the fanega. A token stating "cuartillo" means the piece is equal to a $\frac{1}{4}$ cajuela.

Other tokens were denominated in "canasto" or basket, "tarea" or task (from Guatemala), "caja," "stem" (from the United Fruit Company), "bote," "carreta" (donkey cart!), and the sugar cane plantations had their own terminology such as "un corte de cana" (an area from which the cane was harvested) or "limpia" whose meaning is still unknown, and "peseda" or the weight of the cane hauled to the processor.

Tokens are usually minted in brass, copper, aluminum, and some more recent examples are plastic. Most of them featured the name of the hacienda owner or the name of the business along with the denomination and judging from the books and slide presentation, there may be hundreds and hundreds. Many wait to be discovered by lucky collectors!

Exhibits

Scott brought several spectacular new auction purchases, three 1896 pattern silver 5 Franc pieces from the Belgian Congo, and an 1896 2 Franc Bronze pattern, all extremely rare and lovely!

Ed, now a full-fledged exonomist, exhibited his latest Lighthouse piece, obtained this very night from Michael, a 1907 piece from a Masonic Lodge in Philadelphia with the Atlantic City Absecon Light pictured.

Herb brought several San Francisco exnumia items to tempt the assembled masses and an "Esquire" magazine picturing the supposed "real Indian" who posed for the Buffalo nickel.

Michael W. exhibited several early love tokens, one with "Sally" and one with "Exelda", and an 1848 Buena Vista Bronze Zachary Taylor large format medal celebrating one of General Taylor's Mexican War victories.

Whalen brought his 1967 Canadian Proof or Proof-like set which has a \$20 gold piece included and he commented on the difference in sizes between the Canadian piece and the U.S. \$20, the U.S. piece being about 3 times the gold content.

Gordon brought a number of items recently acquired; a souvenir large Penny from St. Louis, possibly from the fair of 1904, two Mare Island tokens acquired at the token show, several encased cents, a horseshoe encasement with the legs up (so the luck does not run out), an off-center, another horseshoe (with the legs down this time), a Liberty Bell celebrating Swiss America, and an encasement from the St. Louis World's Fair.

Federico added to his token collection with one from near where his family lives, a "Monte Redondo" piece from an area so isolated in

the past that if one were sick, the caretaker would have to go to the ranch and stay to take care of the ill or injured; and two coffee ranch tokens, a 1 cajuela and a 2 cajuelas.

Jerry exhibited three very interesting and rare Chinese-Mexican brass tokens from the China Mexican Mercantile Company, one stating 2 dimes 5 (25 cents!), a 10 cent and a 50 cent piece.

Future presentations:

May 2008: Scott Annechino Coins of the Belgian Congo

June 2008: Annual Banquet

October 2008: Steve Huston

Please contact Michael Wehner at mf_wehner@yahoo.com or a 415 928 4469 if you would like to make a presentation.

Raffle

- 1) A book, "Coins of England", 2005 edition won by Whalen
- 2) A British West African Penny went home with Ed.
- 3) A Mint Set of the coins of Israel found a new home with Daniel
- 4) Mark was a winner of a 10 piece 1987 United States Mint Set of Philadelphia and Denver coins

2008 Annual Papers Contest

The submittal date for the 2008 contest is this month's meeting!

Donations to PCNS

Thanks to the following members for their generous donations:

- a. Jerry Schimmel @ \$50.00 (sponsor)
- b. Ken Takahashi @ \$25.00
- c. Michael Turrini @ \$50.00 (sponsor)
- d. Kerry Wetterstrom @ \$10.00